

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 PM-07 DODE-00 EB-11 IGA-02 SS-15

RSC-01 RSR-01 /078 W
----- 117301

R 172050Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5093
INFO USCINCSO

UNCLAS MONTEVIDEO 2548

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MASS, SWEL, UY, US
SUBJECT: URUGUAYAN REQUEST FOR HOSPITAL SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

REF: STATE 153174; 144328; 133626; 117654; 117544; 066373
MONTEVIDEO 2315; 2166 1982; 1669; 1323; 1020
AID LSB/ASM 1884/AS 418-73; AID/LSB/ASM 1626/AS 418-73
AID/LSB/OC 1791/AS 452-73; AID/LSB/ASM 1626/AS 418-73

1. FROM THE REFERENCED EXCHANGE OF CABLES DEPARTMENT IS AWARE OF GOU'S GREAT INTEREST IN OBTAINING SURPLUS HOSPITAL SUPPLIES FOR USE BY ARMED FORCES IN CIVIC ACTION WORK IN THE INTERIOR AND OF MINISTER OF DEFENSE RAVENNA'S PERSONAL AND INTENSE INTEREST IN THIS MATTER. IN THE COURSE OF THESE EXCHANGES, DEPARTMENT AFTER OFFERING SURPLUS HOSPITAL SUPPLIES (AID LSB/ASM 1626 418-73 AND MVD 1020); INFORMING US THAT SIX HOSPITAL UNITS HAD BEEN SET ASIDE FOR URUGUAY (STATE 117654); IMPLYING THAT THE MAIN PROBLEM WAS THE DIFFICULTY IN TURNING OVER AID SURPLUS FOR USE BY THE MILITARY (STATE 117544 AND 133626); UNEXPECTEDLY INFORMED US THAT THE HOSPITAL SUPPLIES WERE NOT AVAILABLE AT ALL. (STATE 144328). OUR TELEGRAM 2315 REQUESTED THAT URUGUAYAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON BE KEPT ADVISED OF HOSPITAL SUPPLIES DEVELOPMENTS SO IT COULD REPORT TO GOU.

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2. ON THE EVENING OF AUGUST 15 MINISTER RAVENNA INFORMED

ME WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT HE HAD BEEN ADVISED BY THE URUGUAYAN MILITARY ATTACHE IN WASHINGTON GENERAL GROPPi, THAT I APPARENTLY HAD BEEN MISINFORMED BY MY GOVERNMENT BECAUSE HE, GENERAL GROPPi, HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT THE HOSPITAL SUPPLIES WERE AVAILABLE AND THAT THE GOV MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH WAS TAKING STEPS TO BUY THESE SUPPLIES AND WOULD THEN SELL THEM TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. ACCORDING TO MINISTER RAVENNA GENERAL GROPPi TELEPHONED ON AUGUST 10. HE TOLD ME THAT AMBASSADOR LUISI HAS SINCE CONFIRMED THIS GOOD NEWS.

3. I AM NOT SURE WHAT IS GOING ON. I DON'T DOUBT RAVENNA IS MISINFORMED BUT THERE IS NO DOUBT AT ALL THAT THIS EMBASSY HAS AGAIN BEEN PUT IN A DIFFICULT POSITION. IT WILL BE HARD TO AVOID GIVING THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT THE IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE PLAYING GAMES WITH THEM. ALSO IF, AS I EXPECT, THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT TURNS OUT TO BE UNTRUE THERE MAY BE THE SUSPICION THAT FOR POLITICAL OR OTHER DARK MOTIVES WE HAVE DECIDED WE ARE NOT GOING TO LET URUGUAY HAVE SURPLUS HOSPITAL SUPPLIES. MINISTER RAVENNA IS A CLOSE PERSONAL FRIEND OF MINE AND OF THE U.S., OTHERWISE HE LONG SINCE WOULD BE CONVINCED THAT WE HAVE ACTED THROUGHOUT IN BAD FAITH.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: I REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATE WITH AMBASSADOR LUISI AND GENERAL GROPPi TO DETERMINE WHAT ARRANGEMENTS THEY MAY THINK THEY HAVE MADE FOR OBTAINING EMERGENCY HOSPITAL KITS. IF URUGUAYAN EMBASSY IS MISINFORMED, AND I CAN ONLY ASSUME THEY ARE, THEN I HOPE THE DEPARTMENT WILL URGE THEM TO SUPPLEMENT MY EXPLANATIONS WITH THEIRS AS TO WHY THESE SUPPLIES ARE NOT AVAILABLE. IF IN SOME MYSTERIOUS WAY THESE SUPPLIES HAVE BECOME AVAILABLE, THEN I WOULD HOPE THE DEPARTMENT WOULD INFORM ME PROMPTLY SO THAT I CAN SO INFORM MINISTER RAVENNA.

5. THIS ENTIRE CASE LEADS ME TO RECOMMEND THAT IN FUTURE WE NOT OFFER ITEMS FOR DISTRIBUTION THAT CLEARLY MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE.

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